

**Healing Trauma Through
Storytelling**

Kate Miles, LMSW
Clinical and Program Manager,
Solace House

**Grief-Focused Components of
Narrative Therapy**

- Grief Narrative Psychoeducation
 - Explain the purpose of dealing with/talking about the event/trauma
 - There is a choice to leave a wound and hope it gets better or clean out the debris and germs so that it can stop hurting and heal quickly
 - First choice works sometimes, but other times it becomes infected
 - Better choice to clean it now. Might hurt initially, but eventually it will be worth it once it is healed.
 - » Never should hurt more than a little and the work will be done in a way to ensure that it is done at the speed of the client.

**Grief-Focused Components of
Narrative Therapy**

- Grieving the Loss and Resolving
 - Remember, identify, and name things that were done with and for each other.
 - "What I Miss"
 - Doing with loved one
 - Places I miss going with loved one
 - Special rituals that we did together
 - Anticipating "Loss Reminders"
 - What will I miss in the future
 - How will I cope

Grief-Focused Components of Narrative Therapy

- Preserving Positive Memories
 - Memory Project
 - Memory Book
 - Memory Box
 - Memory Collage
 - Videotapes
 - Slide Shows
 - favorite clothes
 - funny habit
 - hobbies
 - best time together
 - favorite things my loved one gave me
 - Nicest things my loved one ever did for me
 - favorite expressions/jokes
 - Letters of their Name
 - Fill in or illustrate a memory for every letter of the loved ones name

Grief-Focused Components of Narrative Therapy

- Redefining the Relationship w/ the deceased and committing to present relationships
 - Circle of Life
 - Child fills out memory for each date that may serve as a trauma, loss or change reminder in the coming years.

Grief Focused Art Therapy

- Psychoeducation
 - Gives the child a language to tell their story that they can use and understand.
 - Shared language between client and therapist that both understand. This gives the client a feeling of being less alone in their pain. Allows the client to use the body and hands to speak about what happened, using colors and textures.

Grief Focused Art Therapy

- Grieving the Loss
 - Draw a Safe Place
 - Visualize place where client feels safe
 - Real or imagined
 - Can be used for thought interruption and for self-soothing
 - Teach client thought-interruption techniques and how to use their safe place to interrupt negative thoughts

Grief Focused Art Therapy

- Draw Your Body
 - Draw a life-size outline of the client's body or draw an outline on a smaller sheet of paper
 - Color in or draw the areas of the body that feel hurt, pain, or various feelings
 - Use colors to represent various feelings or hurts
 - Use band-aids to represent hope for healing.
-

Reference

- Cohen, J.A., Mannario, A.P., & Deblinger, E. (1996). *Treating trauma and traumatic grief in children and adolescents*. New York: The Guilford Press
